(iii) Facilitating contacts between im-. porters from Russia and other CIS countries with Indian tobacco manufacturers and exporters through visits of trade delegations.

(iv) Permitting stock and sales of tobacco in CIS countries and exports on consignment basis against payment in freely convertible currencies.

(v) Encouraging in the Indian exporters to set up offices in CIS countries.

(vi) Opening of 3 additional auctioi platforms in Andhra Pradesh to facilitate the growers to sell their produce early.

(vii) Persuading the Indian Tobacco Association, Exporters, manufacturers and other Traders to participate actively in the auctions to absorb the tobacco crop produced.

(viii) Negotiating with tobacco trade to declare a Minimum Guarantee price (MGP) for tobacco purchase which is higher than the Minimum Support Price (MSP) announced by the Gov ernment.

(ix) Assisting the tobacco trade in obtaining larger quantum of credit from the financial institutions for making purchases of tobacco.

(x) Participating in trade fairs & exhibitions abroad and arranging buyer-seller meet to enhance tobacco exports.

Trade agreements between India and U.K.

2298. DR. ALLADI P. RAJKUMAR: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the recent visit of the Prime Minister of U.K. has strengthened the trade between the two countries;

(b) whether it is a fact that number of trade agreements were signed between India and UK; and

(c) it so, the details thereof and the extent of trade likely to be strengthened during 1997-98?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (DR. BOLLA BULLI RAMAIAH): (a) to (c) During the recent visit to India of the Prime Minister of U.K. with a delegation of businessmen, joint ventures and agreements between private companies from U.K. and India were signed. These joint ventures and agreements included the sectors of insurance, telecommunications, softwares, engineering goods, marketing of real estate development etc. These interactions between the businessmen on either side is expected to result in greater economic and commercial cooperation.

Legal action against Exporters

2299. SHRI KRISHNA KUMAR BIRLA: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have taken a decision to drop legal action against exporters for misusing the value-based advanced licensing scheme;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) the names of those exporters who were found involved misusing value-based advanced licensing scheme; and

(d) the action Government propose to take against such exporters?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (DR. BOLLA BULLI RAMAIAH): (a) The Govt. has announced a scheme permitting reversal of MODVAT Credit on 3.1.97 only against a category of exporters who were found to have availed MODVAT credit in contravention of the VBAL Scheme, with 20% interest per annum for the period the MODVAT was retained by the manufacturer exporter and supporting manufacturer of merchant exporter.

(b) Looking to legal and administrative implications of adjudicating a large